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Massachusetts Department of Social Services—Marie A. Matava, Commissioner





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# **DSS ANNUAL REPORT**

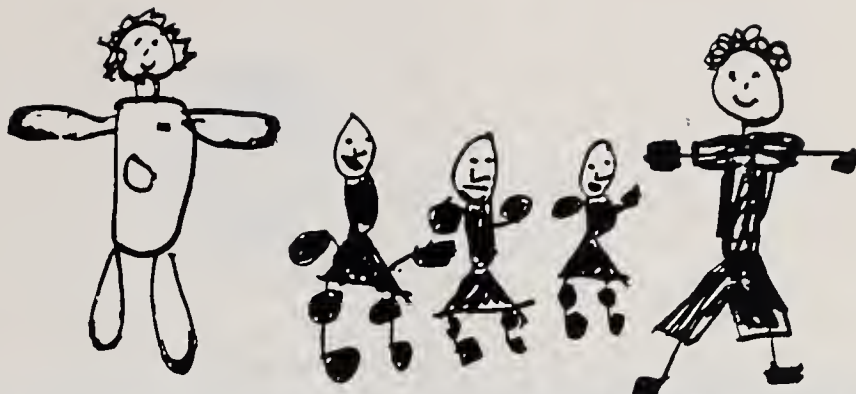
MASSACHUSETTS  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
MICHAEL S. DUKAKIS, GOVERNOR  
MARIE A. MATAVA, COMMISSIONER

FALL 1984

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Vincent Tamboli - Age 6

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# Introduction

Melina Avery - Age 4

I am pleased to be presenting this annual report. It tells of a year that has been very challenging, during which we have been constantly learning, and have been able to accomplish a great deal on behalf of the children and families of Massachusetts.

This past year has seen a dramatic increase in public awareness about child abuse and neglect. More awareness means more reporting, and, as a result, we have felt an enormous increase in the demand on our system. This stepped-up demand, while taxing us to our limits, has also allowed us to get more help to more families at an earlier time. The challenge, then, has been difficult, but welcome, in the sense that we have been able to reach more children and families in need of assistance.

This annual report is dedicated to all those children and families, who have worked hard with us over the year, strengthening their relationships and their lives as families.

What follows will tell more about our important and exciting accomplishments as an agency over the last year.

*Marie A. Matava*

Marie A. Matava  
Commissioner



# Report From The Commissioner



First, a word on those who have given their energies to DSS over the year:

## DSS Staff

Major credit is due to every DSS staff person, as we have all worked to respond to the increased demand on our system. Our social workers do incredibly risky, difficult and valuable work every day. They deserve our recognition and our special thanks.

## Governor Dukakis

Governor Dukakis has shown his continued support and commitment, and an understanding of the complexities of providing services to children and families. His television public service announcement encouraging people to report child abuse and neglect was a unique and effective form of assistance. Both he and the legislature have also given us solid support around the need for resources.

## The Legislature

The State's legislators have shown their commitment to improving services for children and families through their work passing the District Attorney reporting law and, more recently, the foster care review legislation.

## Service Providers

Our contracted service providers have given their expertise helping us respond to the changing needs of families. The Roxbury Multi-Service Center, for example, has developed a unique program providing shelter to families. Many agencies across the State have also helped us respond to the needs of linguistic, ethnic and cultural minorities.

## The Courts

Representatives of the courts have continued to work with us on issues related to social work and the legal system. Judge Mason, for example, has put an innovative 24-hour on-call system into place so that our lawyers and the children they represent can get assistance in emergencies when needed.



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The District  
Attorneys

The District Attorneys have worked closely with us implementing the D.A. reporting law. This joint effort of the law enforcement system and the social service system has been extraordinarily successful. The D.A.'s also, along with the Governor's Office for Human Resources and the Anti-Crime Council, participated in the Violence Against Children Conference, which proved to be a useful forum for increasing understanding and cooperation between social work and law enforcement professionals.

Volunteers;  
Area Board  
Members

Many volunteers gave generously of their time over the year in continued support of the Agency's efforts, including our parent aides and our 600 citizen area board members.

Foster Parents

Thanks go as well to our 4500 foster parents, without whom, quite simply, we could not provide services. Their energy and caring are manifest every day, and the help they give to children is enormously important.

The Media

The media has been successful helping to promote public awareness about child abuse and neglect, particularly child sexual abuse. The Quincy Patriot-Ledger and the Lawrence Eagle-Tribune both run foster parent recruitment columns which have been supportive of our continued need for capable, caring foster parents.

Jack Williams of WBZ-TV has gone beyond his role as a journalist on Wednesday's Child to give his services as an individual, chairing our foster parent recruitment campaign.

The Private Sector

Also of help on that campaign were Garelick Farms and Purity Supreme markets, who donated advertising space, plus the Red Sox, as two of their players star in our foster parent public service announcements for television, one in English and one in Spanish. The private sector has also continued to make a direct difference to children and families through their contributions to the Public Private Partnership Program; they were joined in this effort by United Ways, foundations and municipal governments.

FISCAL YEAR 1984:

Child Abuse and  
Neglect Reporting

Looking to some particular issues of statewide impact over the year, the most immediate is the increase in child abuse and neglect reporting. During Fiscal Year 1984, DSS received 24,919 reports of abuse or neglect involving 41,116 children. During May 1984, over 4,000

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children were reported. By June, investigations had increased over the previous Fiscal Year by 34%. These abstract statistics, in their concrete form, have meant a strong increase in the demand on our social workers, who receive and respond to these reports and work with the families involved.

#### Sexual Abuse

Of the different types of abuse being reported, the most startling increases have been seen in the reporting of sexual abuse. Comparing Fiscal Years 1983 and 1984, the number of children involved in abuse and neglect reports received increased by 26%, from 32,640 children in FY'83 to 41,116 in FY'84. At the same time, reports of sexual abuse increased by 37%, from 3590 children in FY'83 to 4934 in FY'84.

#### D.A. Referrals

A further indicator of sexual abuse reporting rates is the number of cases DSS has referred to the District Attorneys since the D.A reporting law went into effect in October of 1983. From October through the end of Fiscal Year 1984, cases involving 588 children were referred to the D.A.'s. Eighty five percent of the cases referred involved sexual abuse. One third of the children involved in these cases were male, and two thirds were twelve years old or younger.

#### The Challenge of Treating Sexual Abuse

This increased detection of sexual abuse poses a challenge to the Department, to respond with effective treatment. Both through the Professional Development Program and through our own in-house training, we have been working to educate our staff about sexual abuse and its treatment. Our own training efforts have involved the expertise of nationally and locally known professionals in this area.

#### Model Programs

The Department also has a number of model treatment programs in place across the State. In Haverhill, for example, staff from DSS and North Shore Children's Center lead therapy groups for offenders, mothers of victims and adolescent girls who have been victims of sexual abuse. In Gardner, similar groups are led by staff from DSS and the North Central Community Mental Health Center.

In Plymouth, DSS staff work in partnership with MSPOC and private psychologists offering individual and group treatment. Other special programs have been developed in Boston and Springfield. In addition, many offices have developed specialized intake and treatment units which focus on sexual abuse. For Fiscal Year 1985, we



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have allocated 1.6 million dollars for the creation of statewide prevention and treatment programs.

The sexual misuse of children is harmful by its very nature. It is a fundamental betrayal of the trust and power which are given over to adults for the purposes of guidance and protection. If unchecked or untreated, it can result in serious, lifelong emotional disability for the children involved. To check and to treat this problem has been and will continue to be a major area of energy and concern for the Department.

#### The Partnership Forum For Children and Family Services

In other areas of agency operations, the Partnership Forum for Children and Family Services is a project that began this past year and that will continue through this coming year, strengthening the partnership among DSS staff, provider agencies, contributors of funding, and the citizens on whose behalf our programs are developed.

The Forum is a uniquely open negotiating and planning process to set priorities for Public Private Partnership funds. Its result will be a determination of priorities for programs that will have the greatest impact, helping families at the earliest possible time before stresses take their toll.

#### Meeting the Needs of Minorities

Of strong concern to us over the last year, and of continuing concern, is the need to improve our accessibility and responsiveness to the needs of linguistic, ethnic and cultural minorities. During Fiscal 1984, the Linguistic Minority Coordinating Group oversaw several initiatives in this area.

A minority recruitment campaign was launched in January; specific positions have also been targeted for Hispanic staff, and an Hispanic Bilingual/Bicultural Assessment has been put into place for applicants. In the area of training, attention has been paid to increasing supervisors' sensitivity to bilingual workers' needs. Translation of materials into Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese, Greek and Chinese is also now underway on a regular basis.

#### MCCY

In another area, we were pleased with the results of negotiations over the course of the year between DSS and the Mass. Committee for Children and Youth.

Through these negotiations, which centered around what has been a lawsuit since 1974, we have been able to refocus our energies toward an immediate improvement of

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services. This effort culminated in the signing of an agreement which establishes as mutual priorities the equal distribution of staff in response to caseload demands, training for foster parents and for staff, improved health care for children in DSS custody, and several other issues. These are all areas to which the Department has been attending, and we will continue to do so.

#### LOOKING AHEAD

Looking to Fiscal Year 1985, the following areas will receive major attention.

#### Adoption Services

Adoption services need to be strengthened. The fact that we have 700 children under five years of age who have been in care for over eighteen months speaks directly to the need for improvement in this area. In addition, 70% of our adoptions are by foster parents, a resource which we need to utilize more fully.

During FY 1985, a reorganization will take some adoption staff from the regional offices into local area offices. Placing them closer to the communities and children they serve will improve the continuity and responsiveness of our services.

#### Foster Care Review

Fiscal 1985 will also see the beginning of an exciting new program that will further strengthen our efforts to provide permanency for all children. The foster care review bill was signed into law by Governor Dukakis on July 12, 1984, and planning for its implementation on July 1, 1985, will be a major priority for the Department.

The law establishes an independent foster care review unit that will conduct administrative case reviews for each child in the Department's care at least once every six months. The reviews will be performed by a three-person panel, with one person from the Foster Care Review unit and two others, at least one of whom is not a DSS employee.

The purpose of the case reviews is to provide a second independent look at case plans for children in substitute care. The case review must (1) determine the necessity and appropriateness of the child's continued placement, (2) evaluate the extent of compliance with the written service plan, (3) evaluate progress toward alleviating the cause of placement, and (4) project a likely date for the implementation of a permanent plan for the child.

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Services to  
Adolescents

Services to adolescents are also a priority for the coming year. The increased demand on the social service system includes many adolescents in need, particularly adolescents for whom sexual abuse has been an issue. Providing effective services to this group is one of our major current challenges.

Abuse in  
Institutional  
Settings

We are also concerned about the occurrence of abuse in institutional settings. In FY 1985, we will be submitting legislation that creates a mechanism for dealing with this problem more effectively.

Family Reunification  
Grant Program

Also looking to FY 1985, we will be implementing, through the Family Reunification Grant Program, a procedure to ensure continuity of AFDC payments for children in DSS care. This continuity will help break the Catch 22 for families who are receiving assistance when a child goes into care, and for whom continued assistance is an important support for working toward reunification.

Regulations Review

This past year also saw a special effort by the Task Force on Regulations Review, who developed recommendations for changes in the agency regulations. Moving forward with this process this coming year, new regulations will be promulgated and will undergo public review.

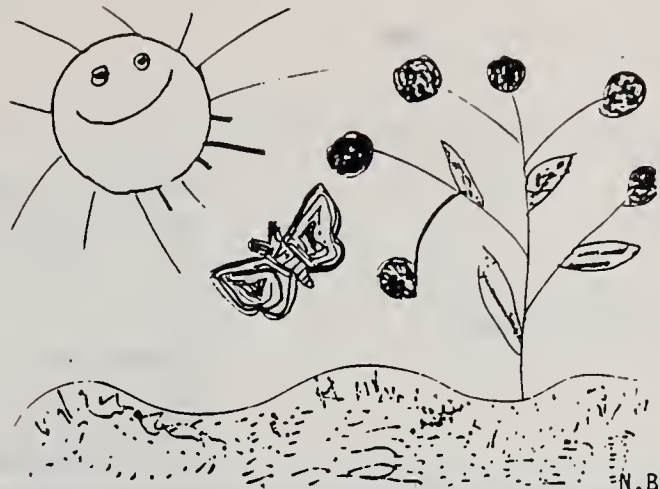
Services for  
Minorities

We will also be working during FY'85 to develop and fund new services that focus on meeting the needs of minorities. This past year's open bid process encouraged proposals for services to linguistic minorities. Toward the end of FY'84, we created the Office for Minority Program Development; this office will work to attract and broaden the participation of minorities in providing services, as well as to increase the Department's capacity, and that of our contracted agencies, to provide services to minorities.

The following reports from the Regional Offices and from Executive Staff further outline some of the Agency's major accomplishments over the year.

# FROM THE STATEWIDE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Melvin Albert,  
President



N.B. Age 4

## Introduction

The Statewide Advisory Council, composed of representatives and alternates elected by each of the 40 area boards, meets a minimum of four times yearly and advises the Commissioner on issues of statewide concern. A steering committee elected by the Council formulates the agendas of meetings and carries out business between meetings. All meetings are open to the public; area board members, Area Directors, Central Office staff, Regional Directors and the public are encouraged to attend.

## FY'84 Meetings

During the past year, the SAC held its meetings in Springfield, Mansfield, Worcester and Boston to encourage participation from all areas of the State. At the opening of each meeting, the Commissioner and Central Office staff briefed participants on issues facing the Department. These presentations then developed into active, useful dialogues, allowing for participation by the attendees and a sharing of information and concerns.

## Healthy Expansion: Increased Participation

Fiscal Year 1984 was a year of healthy expansion for the SAC. The President has encouraged the Council to discuss issues, generate suggestions and take actions as a body on those matters of statewide concern, and over the year, participation by members has increased greatly. SAC members have, for example, made presentations to the Council as a whole on major issues such as adoption services. Through these and other presentations, many questions have been asked and many creative suggestions have been offered.

## Committees

Members' willingness to work on issues and serve on committees and task forces is a hallmark of this past year's successes. Among the activities in which members have participated are: Legislative Committee, Adolescent Task Force, Regulations Review Task Force, Joint Review Committee with the Councils for Children, Committee for Coordinated Services, EOHS Interagency

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Training, Abuse and Neglect Task Force, CHINS Committee and Citizen/Advocacy Organizing Team. SAC members have also taken leadership roles on their respective area boards

#### Looking Ahead

During the coming year the SAC will work to further strengthen its advisory role to the Commissioner on many issues, while continuing to review the budget, advocate for the Department, and assist in the setting of priorities and the development of new programs. As the SAC grows and sets its agenda for the future, it is guided by the goals of promoting the rights of children and families and ensuring that these rights are vigorously supported by DSS policies and practices.

#### An Invitation

The SAC encourages all who are affected by the Department of Social Services to take advantage of the opportunity to participate in the open process afforded by the area boards and the meetings of the Statewide Advisory Council. Thanks from the Council President to all area board members, Commissioner Matava, and the staff of the Citizen Board Development Office for their contributions to the SAC's success.



# From The Regional Directors

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Melina Avery  
Age 4



## REGION I

Federico Brid,  
Regional Director



Teisha Williams - Age 10

### REGIONAL DESCRIPTION

Covering the western third of the state, Region I comprises all of Berkshire, Franklin and Hampshire Counties, most of Hampden County and northwestern Worcester County. Among five catchment areas, the region encompasses 101 cities and towns. While over 60 of these have fewer than 2500 inhabitants, the region includes most of the Springfield/Holyoke/Chicopee Metropolitan Area and several smaller cities including Westfield, Pittsfield and Northampton.

### Geography; Industry

The region is largely rural, including several peaks over 3,000 feet in elevation, broad expanses of forest land and one of the world's largest man-made lakes, the Quabbin. Notwithstanding, over 25% of the labor force is engaged in manufacturing, higher than the national average. The region has seen a major decline in agriculture: fewer than 7,000 of its people live on farms.

Combining both rural and urban qualities, Region I has several unique characteristics that are indicative of widespread social stress and that present special challenges to effective service delivery. These include the following:

### Single Mothers; Teen Births

Twenty percent of the region's households are headed by women, and 13% of the region's births are to teenage mothers. Both these percentages are relatively high, second only to the Boston region.

### Minority Populations

With minority populations mainly centered in urban areas, the region's population as a whole is 3.2% Hispanic and 4.0% Black; there are also significant Portuguese populations in several of the smaller cities and towns. Significant proportions of the region's linguistic minorities have no English-speaking ability.

### Unemployment

Three of the region's Metropolitan Areas—Springfield, Holyoke and Chicopee—have unemployment rates above the State average.

Other  
Service Needs

Western Mass. has been experiencing increasing needs for services to adolescents and for shelters for the homeless. The region also has a persistently high incidence of alcoholism.

BUDGET; STAFF  
CONSUMERS SERVED

With a staff of 340 and a total regional budget of \$29.1 million for FY'84, the Region provided services to 11,266 consumers on any given day during the last year.

SERVICE STATISTICS

Child Abuse  
and Neglect

During FY'84, the Region received reports of abuse or neglect involving 7965 children, as compared to reports received during calendar year 1983 involving 6845 children. These reports resulted in 5374 investigations and 2633 substantiations. Investigations were conducted on 67% of reports received, and 49% of these incidences were substantiated.

Of conditions reported, 55% were neglect, 32% were physical abuse, and 13% were sexual abuse. The Region complied with requirement to investigate emergency reports within 24 hours and non-emergency reports within seven days.

Substitute Care

As of June 30, 1983, there were 1184 children in substitute care in Region I. This number decreased by 5% to 1126 children as of June 30, 1984, with 974 children in family resource placements and 152 in community residential care.

Adoptions

Forty-four adoptions were finalized by DSS staff in the Region during FY'84.

OTHER FY'84  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

During FY'84, the Region and its area offices undertook several initiatives and strengthened existing resources in a variety of areas:

Sexual Abuse

Developed new sexual abuse treatment programs. Maintained and refined a Prototypical Sexual Abuse Intervention Network to coordinate response and minimize trauma in sexual abuse cases.

Mental Health  
Services

Developed new treatment programs in collaboration with the Department of Mental Health. Also developed new mental health and family treatment contracts in remote areas.



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Adolescent  
Services

Expanded placement resources, and networking of resources, for family and community living for adolescents, including a new counseling contract funded with Public Private Partnership monies and new program for transition to independent living.

Implemented CHINS diversion program to move troubled adolescents away from the court system.

Developed family mediation program to support adolescent-parent relationships.

Services to  
Minorities

Developed new contracted services for linguistic minorities, including PPPP contracts.

Expanded existing contracts and developed new ones for protective services to linguistic minorities and geographically remote areas.

Support Services

Developed and expanded support services to avoid substitute placements, including new parent aide programs and expanded homemaker, chore and respite services.

Adoption

Strengthened monitoring and tracking of adoption cases. Strengthened coordination among units to facilitate adoption and other permanency planning processes.

Initiated prototype program in one Area to process foster home adoptions, including training and creation of an adoption staff liaison.

SSI;766  
Cost-sharing

Increased 766 cost-sharing by 5%. Also saved costs by increasing receipt of SSA/SSI benefits for children in care.

Other Initiatives

Organized conference to examine adolescent issues and plan new programs. Founded Protective Task Force to improve screening, response and treatment.

LOOKING AHEAD:  
GOALS FOR FY'84

Investigations

Continue to monitor compliance with timelines for child abuse and neglect investigations.

Plans; Reviews

Continue monitoring the provision of service plans and case reviews.



Adolescent Services	Develop new programs for pregnant and parenting adolescents, particularly in the areas of education and employment.  Further develop specialized foster care program and programs for transition to independent living.
Shelters	Continue efforts to receive 689 funding for the development of emergency shelter for women and children. Implement contract for homeless shelter in one Area. Review and make recommendations regarding area office approaches to homelessness.
Day Care	Expand day care services to better serve linguistic minorities.
Adoption	Evaluate foster-home adoption prototype and expand to Holyoke and Westfield.
Contract Monitoring	Continue monitoring of service contracts.
SSI; 766	Increase 766 cost-sharing and participation in SSA/SSI programs.
Outreach	Strengthen community education about child abuse and neglect.
Berkshire Area	Open Berkshire Area satellite office in North Adams.



Melina Avery  
Age 4

## REGION II

Gerald Nugent,  
Regional Director



Teisha Williams - Age 10

### REGIONAL DESCRIPTION

Region II is centrally located within the State. It includes Worcester, the second largest city in the Commonwealth, and yet is mainly rural, encompassing 65 cities and towns, with many of the accompanying problems of insufficient services, lack of public transportation and scarcity of housing so frequently associated with rural areas.

### Rural Areas

The Gardner and Blackstone Valley areas cover the most rural territory. Of the 40 DSS areas, Gardner ranks 40th in population density. Covering a combined 693 square miles, these areas have little or no public transportation. The Gardner area is also at a high elevation, making travel difficult, especially during the winter. This inaccessibility hampers the utilization of the few services generally available. These areas also face the lack of a strong media and communications network, which is a handicap to outreach and publicity for social services.

### Service Needs

In addition, Gardner and the Valley, as well as Fitchburg, face an extremely short supply of housing, particularly for large families. In these areas and throughout the region, adolescents are an underserved population.

### Economic Distress

Worcester has seen recent dramatic increases in its unemployment rate, and unemployment in the Gardner area is rising monthly. South Central ranks 35th of DSS areas in per capita income and 30th in median family income. Fitchburg has been designated as a poverty area, and economically, the citizens of the Gardner area rank in the bottom quarter of the State.

### Minority Populations

The region as a whole saw a 160% increase in its Spanish speaking population from 1970 to 1980. Hispanics represent 7% of the population in Fitchburg and 3% in Worcester. Worcester has also seen

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an increase in its Southeast Asian population. The Fitchburg area is ethnically diverse, with large French-Canadian, Italian, Irish and Finnish populations.

**BUDGET; STAFF;  
CONSUMERS SERVED**

With a Fiscal Year 1984 budget of \$23.8 million the Region supported a staff of 302 and provided services, on any given day, to 8173 consumers.

**SERVICE STATISTICS**

**Child Abuse  
and Neglect**

During FY'84, the Region received reports of abuse or neglect involving 5503 children, a 5% increase compared to reports received during calendar year 1983 involving 5245 children. Fiscal 1984's reports resulted in 3241 investigations and 1365 substantiations. Investigations were conducted on 59% of reports received, and 42% of these incidences were substantiated.

Of conditions reported, 58% were neglect, 32% were physical abuse, and 10% were sexual abuse. The Region complied with investigation timelines for emergency and non-emergency reports.

**Substitute Care**

On any given day in FY'83, there were 982 children in substitute care in Region II, followed by an increase to 1088 children in FY'84, 948 of whom were in family resource placements and 140 of whom were in community residential care.

**Adoptions**

Sixty-seven adoptions were finalized during FY'84 by DSS staff in the Region.

**OTHER FY'84  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Region II made several noteworthy accomplishments in the areas of program development, community development and management during the past year. Program development focused on services to adolescents, service to women, comprehensive family services and day care.

**Adolescent  
Services**

We expanded services to adolescents and their families by developing a Parent-Child Mediation Program on a contractual basis. The program serves minority adolescents and their families in the Worcester area, working to resolve family disputes with the help of a trained mediator. The program is preventive in that it averts family breakdown, court involvement and unnecessary state agency involvement.



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In addition, the Region expanded its services to adolescents by developing a program for services to young parents, completing the development of two programs for transition to independent living, and by expanding the guardianship program.

**Women-In-Transition  
Services**

The Region also completed the development of a shelter and counseling service for women and their children suffering from domestic violence. This program, serving the areas of Fitchburg and Gardner, was developed in partnership with the National Organization of Women.

**Comprehensive  
Family Services**

In addition, we established programs for Comprehensive Family Services throughout the region, providing a cluster of services to intact families through a single contracted agency. Comprehensiveness and a continuum of services were accomplished here.

**Day Care**

The Region also contracted for two flexible day care programs providing family day care for children whose parents work a second shift or have unusual work hours.

**Working with the  
Community**

The Region's community activities focused on coordinating our efforts with those of private non-profit agencies, making our services known to the community, working more closely with schools on child abuse and neglect issues, special education and funding, and in general letting people know we are here to help. The Department worked with the Central Mass. United Way, municipal and county governments, and many private agencies. We participated in community breakfasts in Gardner, radio and television talk shows in Fitchburg, and educational and cooperative activities with the schools and the Office For Children. These activities have helped us build community integration and partnership.

**Contract  
Monitoring**

Finally the Region has improved its management of all these activities by implementing a comprehensive monitoring system. The Region has monitored 20 to 30 contracts and hopes to fully implement this management tool in Fiscal Year 1985. In this way, we hope to ensure the continued quality of all our programs.

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LOOKING AHEAD:  
GOALS FOR FY'85

Investigations;  
Plans; Reviews

Despite the tremendous increase in child abuse and neglect reports, especially over the past six months, Region II will continue to emphasize compliance with the regulations for emergency and non-emergency investigation of reports. We will also continue to provide all consumers with service plans and to conduct six-month case reviews.

Services to  
Minorities

The Region will continue to address the need for appropriate response to 51A reports within its largest linguistic minority population, the Spanish-speaking community, by continuing to increase the number of bilingual staff. The Region will also assess additional service needs of the new and growing linguistic minority population of Southeast Asians, particularly in the Worcester area.

Permanency Planning

The Region will also continue to emphasize permanency planning for children in substitute care. Although the primary emphasis will continue to be either return home or adoption, the new alternative of guardianship will be an important alternative for selected children.

SSI; 766  
Cost-sharing

Region II has also adopted as additional priorities for FY'85 (1) the increase in SSI/SSA benefits for children in care and (2) the pursuit of cost-sharing agreements and educational opportunities under Chapter 766 Regulations for children with special needs. DSS staff in the Region will be receiving outside training and assistance from the Regional Director of the Social Security Administration in this first area, and from the Regional Department of Education in the second area.



## REGION III

Edward Raynard,  
Regional Director



Vincent Tamboli - Age 6

### REGIONAL DESCRIPTION

Covering the North Shore and Merrimack Valley, Region III is located in the northeast corner of the Commonwealth and is bordered by New Hampshire and the Atlantic Ocean. It is the second largest region in terms of population (1,206,935 in 1980) but only has 9.7% of the State's total square miles. The region includes 53 cities and towns and is divided into eight catchment areas.

The region contains densely populated urban areas such as Lynn and Lowell as well as more rural areas such as Boxford, Amesbury and Westford. There are few industries, and the region has 22% of the State's unemployed population. The region has traditionally been known as having an abundance of community resources, but some services are scarce such as emergency shelter and preventive services for adolescents.

Some of the region's other characteristics include the following:

### Minority Populations

- The number of people from Spanish-language backgrounds in the region grew by 156% from 1970 to 1980; in Lowell, this population increased by 255%. Lawrence's Black population more than doubled over the same period.

### Economic Stress

- Two Region III communities, Lawrence and Haverhill, have unemployment rates higher than the State's average.
- Chelsea has the lowest per capita income in Massachusetts.
- The Lowell area office serves both the largest city, Lowell (population 92,415), and the smallest town, Dunstable (1,671). Twenty-five percent of the region's AFDC population lives in the Lowell area.

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BUDGET; STAFF;  
CONSUMERS SERVED

Region III's FY'84 budget totaled \$40.4 million. On any given day during the past year, the Region was serving 15,661 individuals. The Region's staff, in regional and area offices, numbered 508.

SERVICE STATISTICS

Child Abuse  
and Neglect

During Fiscal Year 1984, the Region received reports of abuse or neglect involving 7850 children, representing a 14% increase from calendar year 1983 when reports received involved 6895 children. Fiscal 84's reports resulted in 6266 investigations and 3171 substantiations. Investigations were conducted on 80% of reports received, and 51% of these incidences were substantiated.

Of conditions reported, 54% were neglect, 35% were physical abuse, and 11% were sexual abuse. The Region maintained nearly 100% compliance with investigation timelines for both emergency and non-emergency situations.

Substitute Care

On any given day during Fiscal Year 1983, there were 1535 children in substitute care in the region, followed by 6% decrease to 1447 children in FY'84, with 1188 children in family resource placements and 259 in community residential care.

Adoptions

Seventy-two adoptions were finalized during FY'84 by DSS staff in the region.

OTHER FY'84  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

During FY'84, Region III

Program Development

- Developed a specialized foster care program for female adolescents during and after their pregnancies.
- Expanded, through the Public Private Partnership Program, women-in-transition services by \$74,864 (\$99,819 including the donation).
- Expanded intensive family services by \$402, 607.
- Expanded day care services by \$703,803.

Cost-sharing

- Increased cost-shared community residential cases by 28%.

Contract Monitoring

- Conducted contract monitoring via site visits to all contracted social services agencies.

Foster Parent  
Support

- Conducted a Foster Parent Spring Conference on 5/12/84 which was attended by 170 foster parents and social workers.

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LOOKING AHEAD:  
GOALS FOR FY'85

Investigations

Plans; Reviews

Permanency Planning

Program Development

Contract Monitoring

During FY'85 Region III intends to

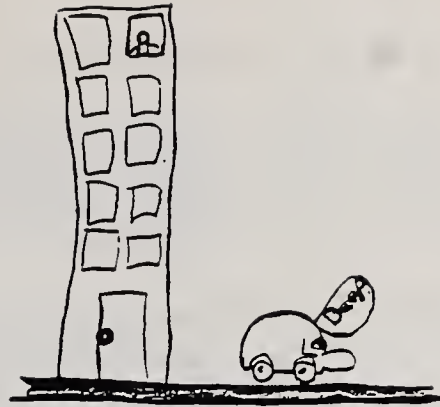
- maintain nearly 100% compliance with abuse and neglect investigation requirements.
- continue to conduct six month case reviews for all children in substitute care, and continue to provide all consumers with written service plans.
- reduce the number of children in foster care by 10%.
- approve 20 guardianships for children in care.
- return 108 children in substitute care to their natural homes.
- increase the number of foster homes available for cultural and linguistic minorities.
- expand substitute care services to troubled adolescents.
- expand services to sexually abused children and their families. These services include treatment for victims and training for social workers and foster parents.
- implement a provider monitoring system.





## REGION IV

John York,  
Regional Director



Aimee Deslauriers - Age 8

### REGIONAL DESCRIPTION

With 24% of the State's families and 23% of the State's children, the Greater Boston Region is the most populous of the Department's six regions.

The region, encompassed by its northern boundary of Wilmington, its western boundary of Westboro, and its southeastern boundary of Cohasset, has broad variations in socioeconomic characteristics among its different communities. Boxborough is the smallest community with a population of 3,126, and Cambridge is the largest community with a population of 95,322.

Region IV serves rural areas, suburbs and densely-populated urban environments. The Region includes the "high-tech" area along route 128, high-income commuter towns, economically depressed communities, "blue-collar" cities, and seasonal communities. The population is primarily white, although some communities have substantial ethnic, racial or linguistic minorities.

### BUDGET; STAFF; CONSUMERS SERVED

With a regional budget of \$38.1 million in Fiscal Year 1984, Region IV was providing casework services to 13,606 consumers on any given day, a significant number of the 1.4 million people residing in the 60 cities and towns which comprise the Greater Boston Region. In FY'84, the Regional Director managed a staff of 405.

### SERVICE STATISTICS

#### Child Abuse and Neglect

During FY'84, Region IV received reports of abuse or neglect involving 5262 children, a 13% increase compared to calendar year 1983, when reports received involved a total 4656 children. FY'84 reports resulted in 4142 investigations and 2143 substantiations. Investigations were conducted on 79% of reports received, and 52% of these investigations resulted in substantiations.

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Of children reported, 48% were reported as neglected, 38% were reported as physically abused, and 13% as sexually abused. The Region achieved a 95% compliance rate for 7-day investigations and a 100% compliance rate for 24-hour response to emergency reports.

Substitute Care

On a given day in FY'83, there were 1163 children in substitute care in the Greater Boston Region, followed by a 4% decrease to 1120 in FY'84, with 693 children in family resource placements and 427 in community residential care.

Adoptions

Sixty adoptions were finalized by DSS staff in the region during FY'84.

OTHER FY'84  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Program  
Development

The Region worked closely with contracted agencies tailoring purchased services to the needs of Greater Boston's children and families. Area and regional staff developed 68 new or expanded contracted services to (1) support adolescents and their families to avoid placements, (2) develop alternative placements to group care, and (3) provide counseling and other supportive services to families with substantiated 51A's.

Increasing  
Adoptions

Fiscal 1984's 60 adoptions represent a 22% increase over FY'83. This increase is attributed to (1) the implementation of a regular case review schedule, (2) formalized adoption training for staff, (3) the addition of a staff person half-time to coordinate and monitor homefinding activities and to train area staff on improving the homestudy process, and (4) improved quality of adoption services through increased publicity and recruitment via active participation of Department staff on the Adoption Advisory Board which is composed of adoptive parents, adoptees and private agency staff.

Mental Health  
Services

The Region also implemented a tracking system to monitor the provision of services to the region's mentally retarded consumers and, when appropriate, to make referrals to the Department of Mental Health, ensuring the continuation of needed services for these consumers.

In addition, since April, respite services have been provided to 609 families, and at the end of FY'84, the voucher day care program included 540 children.

LOOKING AHEAD:  
GOALS FOR FY'85

In FY'85, Region IV will be undertaking several program initiatives aimed at improving service delivery, case management, and permanency planning, particularly for adolescents in group care;



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Investigations;  
Plans; Reviews

- o The Region will continue to work toward 100% compliance with (1) child abuse and neglect investigation time lines and (2) service planning and case review requirements.

Program  
Development

- o A comprehensive sexual abuse treatment program will be fully implemented.
- o In-home supportive services will be increased to keep families intact.
- o Diversionary programs and other in-home services designed to maintain adolescents at home will be implemented.

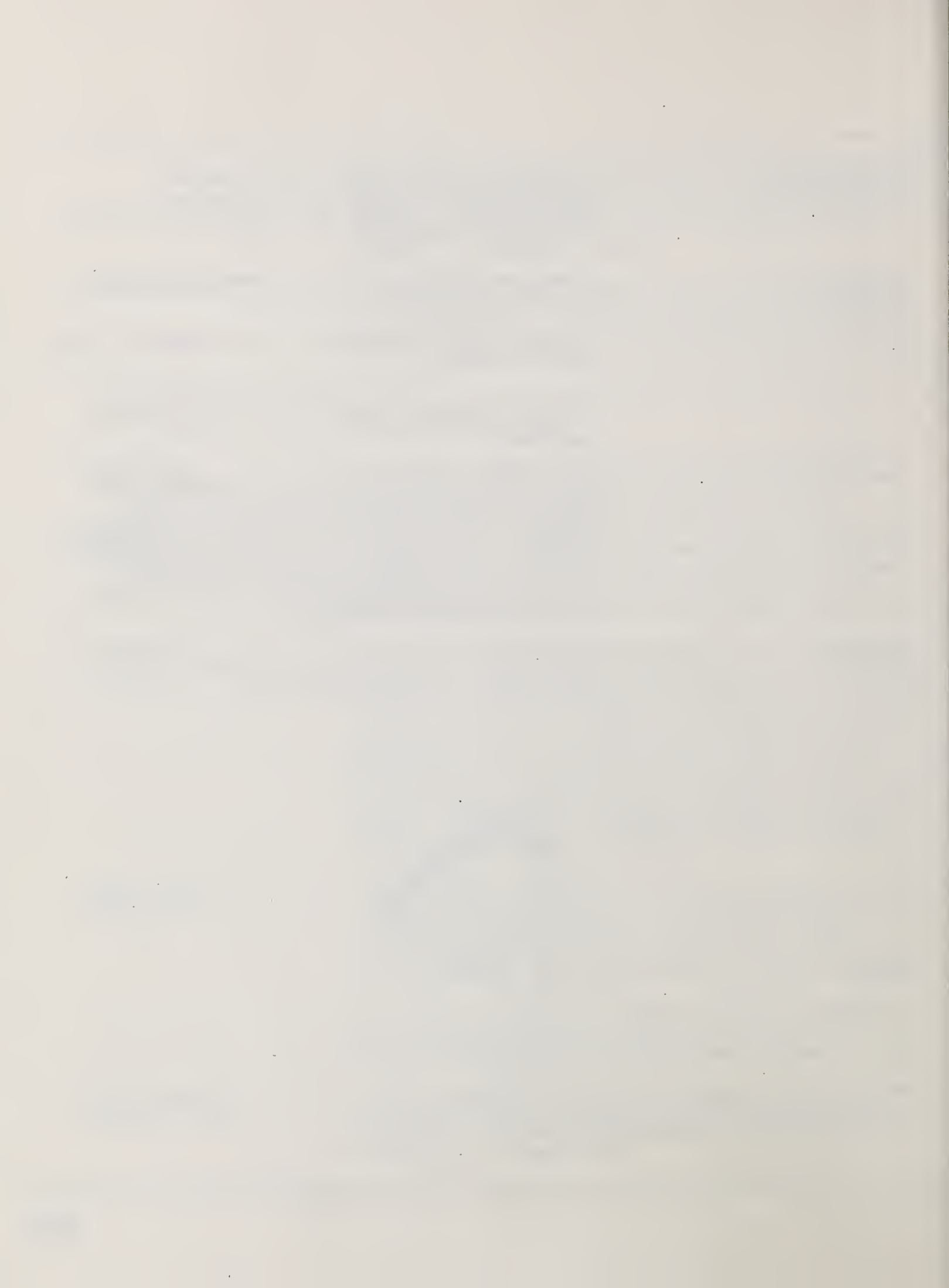
Homefinding

- o The Region's homefinding efforts will continue to focus on recruitment of linguistic and cultural minority homes. Area staff will continue their efforts to identify and refer appropriate children for adoption, with the goal of increasing the number of children with finalized adoptions. Area office training will be implemented to increase both adoption and guardianship referrals.

Outreach

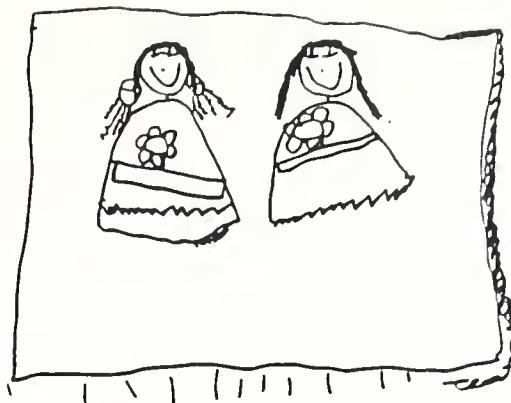
- o Public education about abuse and neglect will continue, with a focus on sexual abuse.





## REGION V

Mary Adams,  
Regional Director



Melina Avery - Age 4

### REGIONAL DESCRIPTION

Region V includes all of Southeastern Massachusetts, Cape Cod and the Islands. The Region is comprised of seven service areas with area offices located in Attleboro, Brockton, Plymouth, Taunton, Fall River, New Bedford and Yarmouth.

### Population Growth

Southeastern Massachusetts is the most rapidly growing region in the Commonwealth. While most other regions saw stable or declining populations, Region V showed an 18% increase in population from 1970 to 1980. Plymouth and Barnstable Counties, in particular, are seeing continued rapid population growth. The number of people from Spanish-language backgrounds living in the region grew by 255% between 1970 and 1980.

### Distressed Economy

Southeastern Massachusetts is one of the most economically distressed regions in the Commonwealth. Its diverse economy includes older cities with declining manufacturing enterprises, rapidly expanding suburbs, and rural areas dependent on seasonal agriculture. A portion of the region depends heavily on tourism for its economic base.

The region has low per capita income, with Fall River and New Bedford the second and third lowest cities in the State. Throughout the region, there are high percentages of families living below the poverty level, as well as high public assistance caseloads, since many residents need to supplement low or seasonal wages.

### Unemployment

Unemployment within Region V is consistently higher than the statewide average, particularly in the older Bristol County cities. Throughout the past year, New Bedford, Fall River and Brockton have regularly had the three highest unemployment rates of the State's eight major Labor Areas, sometimes up to 6% higher than the statewide average.



**BUDGET; STAFF;  
CONSUMERS SERVED**

During the past year, Region V's seven area offices and the Regional Office employed 475 administrators, supervisors, social workers and support staff to carry out Agency goals. The Region V budget for Fiscal Year 1984 was \$36.6 million. On any given day in Southeastern Massachusetts during FY'84, the Department was providing services to 15,117 individuals.

**SERVICE STATISTICS**

**Child Abuse  
and Neglect**

During FY'84 the Region received reports of abuse or neglect involving 8194 children, compared to reports received during calendar year 1983 involving 6638 children. Fiscal 1984's reports resulted in 5953 investigations and 2830 substantiations. Investigations were conducted on 73% of reports received, and 48% of these incidences were substantiated.

Of conditions reported, 57% were neglect, 32% were physical abuse, and 11% were sexual abuse. The Region was able to respond to all emergency situations within 24 hours.

**Substitute Care**

On a given day in FY'83, there were 1649 children in substitute care in Region V, followed by 2% decrease to 1621 in FY'84, with 1314 children in family resource placements and 307 in community residential care. The number of children in care more than 18 months was reduced by 9% during the course of the year, from 751 to 697. In addition, 636 children were returned home.

**Adoptions**

Seventy-eight adoptions were finalized by DSS staff in Region V during FY'84.

**OTHER FY'84  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Service delivery to clients in Southeastern Massachusetts was further enhanced during FY'84 by (1) increasing the range of service options, particularly for adolescents, and by (2) establishing targets for administrative performance in a number of service categories.

**Adolescent Services**

During the past year we either expanded or initiated a number of new services for adolescents. We now have, in most area offices: short and long term specialized foster care, family mediation, structured day treatment, independent living, young parents services, and primary care for severely disturbed teenagers at risk of long-term institutional care. These programs have set the stage for the development of a continuum of adolescent services in FY'85.

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#### Improved Management

The Region has also implemented a Performance Indicator System as a management tool for identifying area office progress toward agreed-upon objectives. This system allowed us to monitor the status of service outcomes, including reduction in length of stay, timely service response, and appropriate substitute care utilization. The system should provide a strong base for quality assurance in FY'85.

#### LOOKING AHEAD: GOALS FOR FY'85

In the coming year, Region V will continue to improve both the range and the quality of the services it provides to residents of Southeastern Massachusetts. We will work to improve protective services, enhance permanency planning, and develop a broader array of services, particularly for adolescents.

#### Investigations; Plans; Reviews

Compliance with timelines for investigations of child abuse and neglect is a continued goal, as is the provision of service plans and case reviews.

#### Adolescent Services

In response to the critical need for adolescent services, Region V hopes to develop, through the use of 689 funding, a residential transition-to-independent living program for 8-10 adolescents in the Brockton area. This program is planned for FY'86 implementation and would be accessible to all Region V area offices.

#### Services to Young Parents

Also through possible 689 funding, a young parents program is planned in the Taunton and New Bedford areas, the model for which is the unique, highly successful program now under contract with New Bedford Child and Family Services. We will further strengthen services to teenage parents through our new residential demonstration program in Brockton (Louison House) and through the expansion of existing young parents services in Fall River.

#### Supporting Intact Families

In terms of placement alternatives, the Taunton and New Bedford area offices have recently contracted for adolescent tracking programs, and the Cape office will soon initiate a comprehensive family services program, which will offer diagnostic and interventive services, family life and home management education, and employment counseling. It is anticipated that, when combined with strengthened and expanded parent aide programs, these in-home supportive services will offer viable alternatives to substitute placement.

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Foster Home  
Recruitment

It is also essential that we improve both the quality and availability of foster homes in Region V. Toward that end, we will require each area office to implement a workplan for improving family resources. We will expect each office to develop a specific recruitment program for adolescent, special needs and linguistic minority homes, as well as a system for training and providing support services to existing foster families. Recruitment plans for hard-to-place children will focus on the use of local newspapers and cable television stations, particularly those serving the Portuguese and Spanish-speaking communities.

Educational  
Advocacy  
Program

Finally, our recently established Educational Advocacy Program should result in increased coordination and cost-sharing with local education agencies. This program will focus on the three largest areas of the Region—Brockton, New Bedford and Fall River.



## REGION VI

**Donna Makin,  
Regional Director**



Vincent Tamboli - Age 6

### REGIONAL DESCRIPTION

Region VI encompasses the city of Boston and the town of Brookline, covered by five areas serving 19 district neighborhoods. The Temporary Home for Women and Children, funded through a separate account, is also administered by the Region.

### Single Mothers; Teen Births

While Boston has lost total population, like other large capital cities, the City has become poorer and more "service needy". Female-headed households account for close to 40% of the region's households. Fifteen percent of births in the region were to teenage mothers, a total representing 21% of teenage births in the State.

### Unemployment

Statewide, youth employment is estimated at 10.5%; youth unemployment in the City, however, stands at 35%, with 45% of minority youths jobless.

### Minority Population

The Boston region houses 57.5% of the State's Black population and 26% of the Hispanic population. Boston's Hispanic population more than doubled between 1970 and 1980. In the past five years, Boston has also seen rapid growth in its Asian population, particularly persons from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

### BUDGET; STAFF; CONSUMERS SERVED

Region VI's FY'84 appropriation totaled \$48.5 million. This funding supported a staff of 456. On an average day in FY'84, the Region directly served 10,555 individuals. In addition, over 20,000 other consumers were served over the year through contracted service programs.

### SERVICE STATISTICS

#### Child Abuse and Neglect

During FY'84, the Region received reports of abuse of neglect involving 6342 children, as compared to reports received during calendar year 1983 involving 5979 children. Fiscal 1984's reports resulted in 5110 investigations and 2751 substantiations. Investigations were conducted on 80% of reports received, and 54% of these incidences were substantiated.

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Of conditions reported, 54% were neglect, 34% were physical abuse, and 11% were sexual abuse. The Region was able to maintain compliance with the 24-hour response requirement to child abuse emergencies.

**Substitute Care**

On a given day in FY'83, there were 1764 children in substitute care in Region VI, followed by a slight increase to 1794 in FY'84, with 1411 children in family resource placements and 383 in community residential care. Through stronger and more focused permanency planning, 460 children were returned home during FY'84.

**Adoptions**

Fifty-two adoptions were finalized by DSS staff in Region VI during FY'84.

**OTHER FY'84  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Other accomplishments during FY'84 include the following:

**Adolescent  
Services**

Funded three new programs to provide on-site counseling services to high-school age students in the Boston Public Schools, many of whom are adolescent mothers now able to remain in school.

Increased the capacity by 40% of the New England Home for Little Wanderers' "Cluster" program, a residential program which prepares adolescents previously in foster and group care for independence.

**Services to  
Minorities**

In order to reflect Boston's growing and changing population, targeted increased programming for ethnic and linguistic minorities through the Cape Verdean Community House, St. Leo's Haitian Multi-Service Center, Sociedad Latina and the South Cove Mental Health Center.

Established with Catholic Charitable Bureau the State's first and only protective services program designed to respond to Vietnamese, Laotian and Cambodian clients.

**Family Shelters**

Addressed the chronic shelter needs of victims of domestic violence through a contract with Women's Educational Industrial Union Horizons, as well as through a new family shelter run by Roxbury-Multi-Service Center and funded with Public Private Partnership monies.

**Staff Support**

Continued to expand the Region's partnership contract with the Judge Baker Guidance Center, making available to area social workers both psychiatric and psychological training and consultation on difficult cases.



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#### Office Moves

As part of an Economic Development/Revitalization Project with the City of Boston, developed and implemented new permanent offices for our Dorchester/South Boston office in Fields Corner.

Relocated the Roxbury/South End office into the Solomon Carter Fuller Mental Health facility, improving the physical conditions of the office.

Found new quarters for the Regional Office at 150 Causeway Street.

#### LOOKING AHEAD: GOALS FOR FY'85

The Region will continue to work for compliance with child abuse and neglect investigation timelines and with requirements to provide service plans and case reviews.

#### Sexual Abuse

The Region is currently developing a sexual abuse initiative that will draw on locally available assessment, investigation and treatment services for children who have been sexually abused. Our primary emphasis will be on the provision of treatment services to children under six, with a secondary emphasis on children under 12. The Region will also invite other private and public agencies to participate in training programs that will help staff develop their assessment, investigative and crisis-intervention skills.

#### Adoption

The Region has just received a federal grant for a project to increase the number of adoptions of ethnic and cultural/linguistic minority children by twenty-five. Additional goals of the project are to sensitize non-minority DSS workers to the unique needs of minority children and families, and to share new skills developed as a result of the project with the other five DSS regions.

#### Homefinding

The Region has increased its support to the area homefinding units in their efforts to expand the pool of available foster homes. We will also be exploring ways to create a pool of homes with the capacity to serve youngsters who have serious emotional problems, as well as ways to better support our foster parents who care for this difficult population.

#### Mental Health Services to Minorities

The regional and area offices intend to work cooperatively with staff from the regional OFC office, the regional Inter-Departmental Team and specialists in the field, assessing the unique needs of minorities, both



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ethnic and linguistic/cultural, and seeking services from the mental health system. The goals will be to enhance this population's access to such services and to sensitize mental health professionals to the needs of these children and their families.

Day Care

The Region will work to provide flexible day care services in those instances where care is ordered by a court or in emergency situations. This would be a partial supplement to the conversion of voucher to contracted day care and would allow area workers some flexibility in court-ordered and emergency situations.

Adolescent  
Services

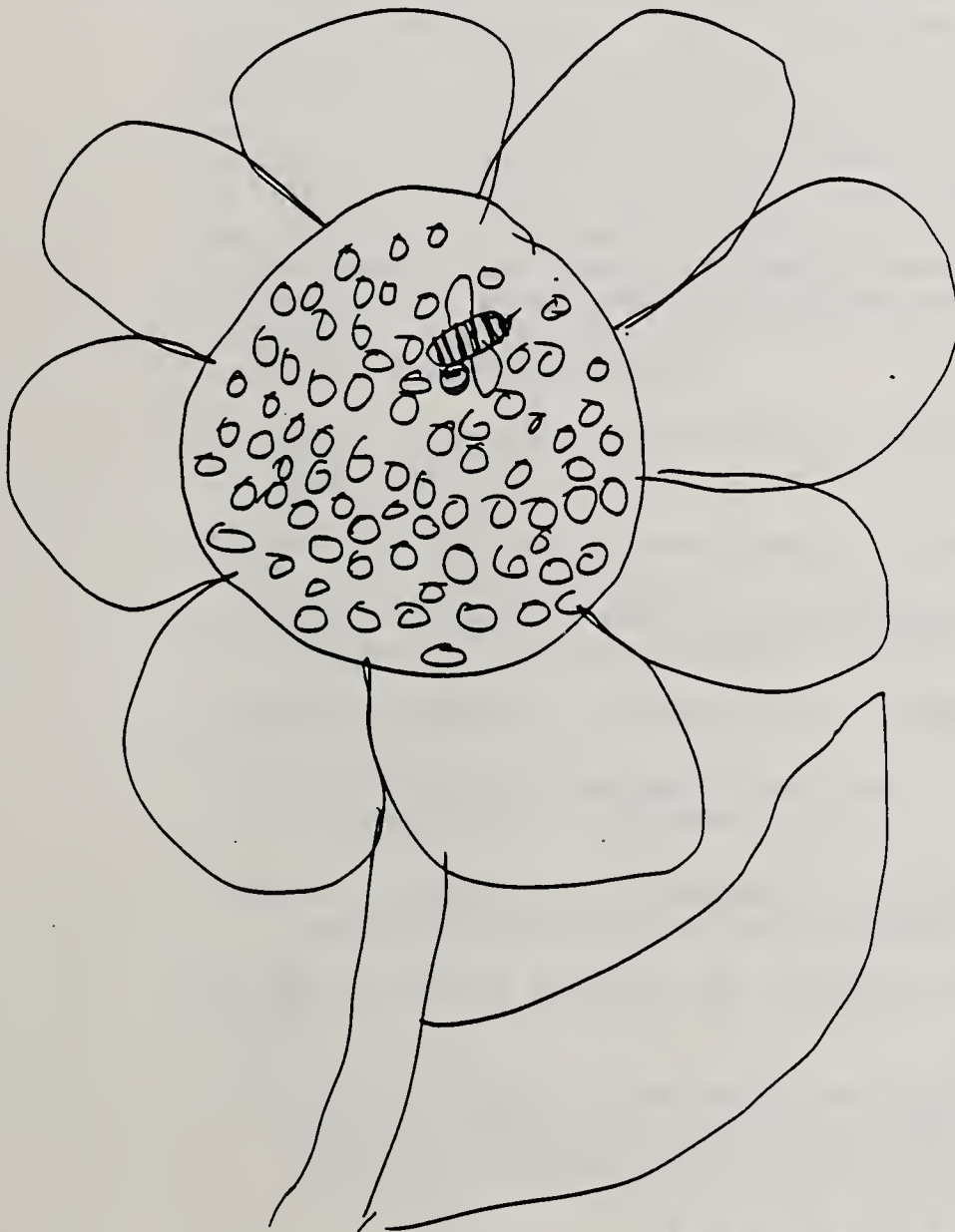
The Region will also increase its capacity to serve adolescents in need of emergency shelter services.

Interpreter  
Services

The Region intends to contract with a limited number of private agencies for short-term interpreter services to linguistic minorities and the hearing-impaired. Through these agreements, professional staff will assist DSS area workers in assessments, investigations, adoption and guardianship services, and court appearances. This assistance will greatly enhance our capacity to provide services, utilizing skilled personnel who are conversant both with the language and cultural uniquenesses of our clients, and who also have professional training and experience in a variety of fields.

## Reports From The Executive Staff

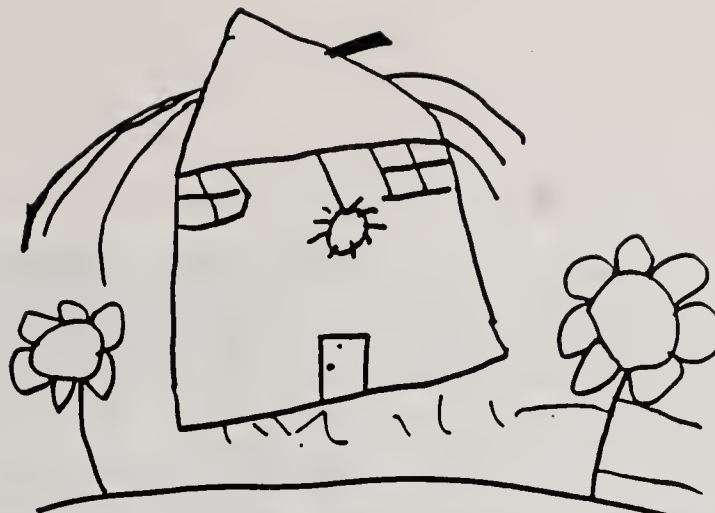
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Teisha Williams - Age 10







Melina Avery - Age 4

## Executive Staff: Introduction

### The Deputy Commissioner's Office

The Deputy Commissioner's Office includes two units: the Field Operations Unit, which directs and monitors regional and area office operations, and the Quality Assurance Unit, which defines service directions and works to promote higher quality services. In addition, the Deputy's Office, through the Fair Hearings Coordinator, oversees and evaluates fair hearings for consumers and foster parents. The Deputy's Office also participates in the Inter-Departmental Team, a group of representatives from human service agencies who resolve cases where children have become stuck in the system and need multi-agency assistance.

### The Office of Administrative Services

The Office of Administrative Services includes the following units:

Budget: develops and oversees Agency's budget;

Purchased Services: responsible for contracting and payments to service-provider agencies;

Financial Compliance: responsible for revenues;

Physical Planning: responsible for Agency's statewide office space and equipment; and

Business Affairs: handles supportive functions and purchases supplies for Central Office.

### The Office of Human Resources

The Office of Human Resources is composed of four units:

Personnel: responsible for payroll and other personnel systems. This unit also handles Labor Relations, primarily with the unions.

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Recruitment: responsible for posting positions and recruiting staff, handling civil rights and Equal Employment Opportunity issues, and ensuring compliance with Affirmative Action and 504 requirements.

Training: manages pre-service and in-service training, educational conferences and the Professional Development Program.

Planning: tracks and studies caseloads and their relationship to staffing requirements, analyzes attrition rates and other staffing issues and needs.

The Office of  
Professional  
Services

The Office of Professional Services develops and implements Agency-wide standards for social service practice, new program models, and guidelines for program monitoring and evaluation. OPS includes the following units: Case Practice; Policy; Research, Evaluation and Planning; and Service Resources. The Case Practice Unit monitored this past year's implementation of the District Attorney reporting law.

The Office  
for Systems

The Office for Systems is responsible for developing and implementing the Agency's management information system, "ASSIST". The Office includes three units: the Advanced Systems Design Unit, which is responsible for systems needs assessment and conceptual design and for handling special requests, enhancements and security; the Systems Design and Development Unit, which is responsible for detailed design, programming, implementation and maintenance of all the Agency's computer modules; and the User Liaison and Support Unit, which provides assistance to users of the system and ensures data quality and usefulness.

The Office of  
the General Counsel

The Office of the General Counsel is in charge of all DSS litigation, including both child welfare court cases, which are handled by Regional Attorneys, and cases that have a Department-wide impact. The Office is also responsible for administrative legal issues, such as Department regulations and the implementation of state and federal child welfare laws.

The External  
Relations Division

The External Relations Division is composed of four units: Citizen Board Development, which works to support and strengthen DSS' 40 Area Boards and the Statewide Advisory Council; Consumer Action, which responds to consumer complaints and inquiries; Communications, which handles media contacts and develops Agency publications; and Intergovernmental Affairs, which acts as liaison to the state legislature. The Director of External Relations is the Agency's liaison to the federal government.

Each of the following reports from Executive Staff highlights a major accomplishment of each of these offices over the past year.



Melina Avery - Age 4





# OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

Joseph Collins



Maura Collins - Age 6

## Transfer of MR Clients to DMH

During the early months of FY'84, Commissioner Matava and Commissioner James Callahan of the Department of Mental Health agreed to the transfer of certain mentally retarded clients, twenty-two and older, from DSS to DMH. This agreement exemplified a strengthened and spirited cooperation, at the highest level, between the two agencies. The Deputy Commissioner's Office was responsible for implementing this transfer.

The agreement specifically called for the transfer of approximately \$325,000 of clients services to DMH during FY'84, plus an additional transfer of \$1.9 million of services during FY'85. This total transfer will affect well over 100 clients who have been historically served by DSS but who are eligible for DMH services. This process has involved the efforts of many social workers from DSS, case management staff from DMH, provider-agency staff, the families and, most importantly, the clients themselves. For FY'85, the \$1.9 million transfer is well underway. In addition, a mutual evaluation of these interdepartmental efforts and their impact on clients will be conducted in the spring of 1985.

## Identifying Obstacles to Permanency

Another major undertaking during FY'84 focused on permanency planning, specifically for children under five who are in DSS custody and who have been in out-of-home care for eighteen months or more. In order to identify impediments to permanency for this population across the State, the Deputy Commissioner's Quality Assurance Unit developed procedures for administrative case review. Approximately 50 children were then reviewed during FY'84 by Central Office staff.

These case reviews have identified barriers to the achievement of permanent plans arising from (1) disagreements between DSS and the District and Probate court systems regarding grounds for terminating parental

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rights, (2) the cumbersome adoption process, and (3) caseload problems in area offices and in Adoption and Legal Units. Staff from the Deputy's Office, while maintaining their sensitivity to the tremendous efforts of the courts, will work closely during FY'85 with the judges, the regional offices and the General Counsel's Office to address these problems.

Evaluating  
Service  
Delivery

Over the course of FY'84, the Deputy Commissioner's Quality unit conducted evaluations of service delivery practices in 30 area offices. The evaluation covered the areas of screening and investigation of child abuse and neglect reports, service plans, and case reviews. The unit also assessed Regional monitoring of purchased service contracts. Written reports highlighting each study's objectives, methods, findings and recommendations are available through the Deputy's Office.

OFC Public  
Approval Study

Also during FY'84, The Deputy Commissioner and his staff coordinated the first phase of the Office for Children's Public Approval Study of the Department's services. This objective overview by OFC has assisted the Department in assessing the quality of our foster care and adoption programs. During FY'85, OFC will provide us with technical assistance in the design and implementation of policies and procedures that comply with OFC regulations.

Interstate Compact  
Program Centralized

Also during FY'84, the Interstate Compact Program was centralized into the Deputy Commissioner's Office. Previously, the regional offices supervised, authorized and monitored child placements and pre-adoption home studies that crossed state boundaries. Through the combined efforts of regional office staff, conducting detailed inventories of all active interstate cases, 1200 cases were identified and were then transferred to the Deputy Commissioner's Office. The centralization of this program places Massachusetts in structural harmony with child-welfare systems across the country.

Looking Ahead

The Deputy Commissioner's Office will continue to address similar "systems" issues during FY'85. The Deputy and his staff will work closely with the regional offices and will stress organizational activities that support sound case practice, responsive protective services, and permanency planning.



# OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

John Salvati,  
Assistant  
Commissioner



Melissa Andrade - Age 7

## Ready Payments

On July 1, 1984, the Department of Social Services implemented the Ready Payments System. This system, developed by the State Comptroller, offers a payment option to eligible providers of services to state human service agencies. It was designed to provide predictable and periodic payments to these contractors.

The System provides for semimonthly payments made through the Office of the State Treasurer. The first payment, issued on the 15th of every month, is based on a pre-established amount equal to, but not greater than,  $1/24$ th of the maximum obligation of each contract. The second payment, issued on the 30th of each month, is an adjusted amount based on the actual amount of the invoice less the base payment made on the 15th.

## Provider Eligibility

Provider participation in the System is voluntary, and eligibility for participation in the program is based on:

- o The provider having a history of more than 12 months of good performance both in the provision of services and the timely submitting of bills.
- o Participants being non-profit organizations.
- o The provider having on file with the state agency a current certified public accountant's Audit Report with a "clean" or unqualified opinion. A "clean" report is one where the independent Auditor concludes that the financial statements which present the financial position, results of operation, and changes in fund balances are in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.
- o Greater than 50% of the provider's income being derived from government agencies.

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DSS' Role

Participation of designated state agencies is mandatory. Training and on-going technical assistance for providers and staff is the responsibility of the Assistant Commissioner for Administrative Services.

A Joint Effort

Ready Payments work due to the joint efforts of the Comptroller's Division, the Executive Office of Human Services, the State Treasurer's Office, the Rate Setting Commission and the human service agencies.

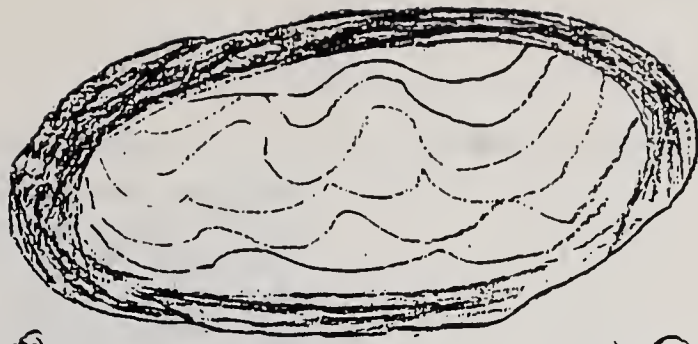
A Successful Beginning

DSS has 329 contracts on the System. All indications are that the provider community is pleased with the program and that the number of contracts on the System will increase in the future.



# OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Edward Boileau,  
Assistant  
Commissioner



Maura Collins - Age 6

## Introduction

Over the past year, the Training Unit has continued to work to provide quality programs as an essential support for staff. Particularly for social work staff in the field, training and educational programs have been offered which provide opportunities to increase workers' knowledge of child welfare, casework practices and case management, thereby improving their capacity to serve children and families in an efficient and effective manner. Training is consistent with the Agency's goals - to protect children and to support families so they can protect and care for their own children.

## Social Work Training Institute Established

Fiscal Year 1984 was marked by the establishment of the Social Work Training Institute in Worcester. Supporting the Institute is a standardized and thorough curriculum, with major focuses on pre-service training and the investigative process.

Housed in an under-utilized section of a public high school, the Institute provides an accessible, centrally located site for training statewide in a professional setting. A full range of programs were provided throughout the year, and the Institute continues to expand its offerings. Training calendars are sent to all field offices bimonthly so that supervisors and workers may have the schedule of Institute offerings at their fingertips.

The four major Institute programs for staff are: Pre-Service Training, The Forum for Social Work and the Law, Skill-Specific Training and Educational Programs, and Management/Supervisory Training.

## Pre-Service Training

The new centralized Pre-Service Training Program, established in August 1983, is now in its sixth session. The curriculum, which is continually being revised and expanded to better serve the needs of new social workers, now consists of 11 intensive days. The



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program includes many aspects of permanency planning and casework practice, stages of child development, and placement issues. Pre-Service is now a part of every employee's training experience at the start of his/her employment with DSS. More experienced workers may elect to attend individual sessions which are of interest to them.

#### The Forum for Social Work and the Law

The Forum for Social Work and the Law, a major conference for the Department's social work and legal staff, was held four times in FY'84. The Forum trains DSS lawyers and social workers to deal with joint efforts for providing protective services and permanency planning for children and families. This is a residential, three-day program in which more than 400 social work and legal staff have participated.

#### Skill-Specific Training

Skill-Specific Training and Educational Programs, presented throughout the year, represent the core of the Social Work Training Institute. Supervisors and social workers receive training in many aspects of social work practice and protective services. Among the programs offered are Investigations of Child Abuse and Neglect; Observation, Documentation, and Case Recording; Service Planning and Case Conferencing; Assessment; D.A. Reporting Law; Sexual Abuse; and Working with Adolescents. Future additions to the program include Issues of the Homeless; Providing Culturally Responsive Services; and Developmental Disabilities.

#### Management/Supervisory Training

Through Management/Supervisory Training, supervisors, who are critically important members of a social services delivery team, have had the opportunity to attend training programs tailored to their needs as protective social service managers, administrators, educators and clinicians. Management/Supervisory Training includes such topics as legislative mandates, budgetary processes, leadership styles, communications, performance appraisal, productivity, delegation, clinical supervision and supervision in protective services.

#### Catalogue will be Available

A year-long catalogue of in-service training available through the Social Work Training Institute will be distributed this fall to all field staff. Workers and supervisors will then be able to plan ahead for training events. Through the combination of the Institute and the Agency's Professional Development Program, staff is provided with training and educational opportunities within the Agency, with formal degree programs, and at outside conferences and workshops. These represent the efforts of the Department to provide a variety of educational experiences that are responsive to the needs of all DSS employees.

# OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Janet Eustis,  
Assistant  
Commissioner



Kelli Brown - Age 12

## Ensuring Consistent Health Care

Ensuring regular, consistent health care for children in substitute placement has been and will continue to be a priority for the Department. The emphasis is on ensuring that children receive routine medical and dental care, according to the Project Good Health schedule, as well as any needed follow-up treatment.

## The Medical Passport

During the spring of 1984, pilot projects were developed and implemented in five area offices—Charlestown, Norwood, Wakefield, Waltham and Westfield—in order to identify problems and barriers prior to statewide implementation of new health care policies, procedures and a Medical Passport. Following a needs assessment in those offices, the Passport was field tested to assess its usefulness.

The Medical Passport provides an intake health history, a simplified ongoing medical record, documentation of medical and dental visits and an indication of any needed follow-up treatment. Information needed for monitoring health care services will be obtained through the Passport and entered on the DSS computer system ASSIST.

The medical community has been instrumental in the Passport's development. Both DSS and DPH have been working with the Massachusetts Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and have obtained their formal endorsement.

## Training

In addition to the pilot projects this past spring, DSS held statewide training for management staff to introduce the Passport, to obtain feed-back on proposed policies and procedures, and to present the Project Good Health and WIC programs.

In October of 1984, another round of statewide training will occur regionally on the finalized policies and procedures, the Passport, PGH, and nutritional entitle-



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ment programs. This will be followed by foster parent training in area offices and implementation of the Passport.

#### Looking Ahead

The Passport is expected to be in place for all children in substitute care by April of 1985. During FY'85, implementation and ongoing activities will be facilitated by nurses hired by the Department. They will act as consultants to DSS social workers and supervisors, will help with monitoring activities and will serve as liaisons between DSS and local medical providers.



Teisha Williams - Age 10



# OFFICE FOR SYSTEMS

Raymond Richard,  
Assistant  
Commissioner



Jennifer McDonough - Age 10

## Systems Development

As mandated by the Department's enabling legislation, the Office for Systems has been continuing with the design and implementation of a comprehensive, statewide management information system. This implementation is on a five-year plan, and FY'84 was year four. The system is called ASSIST, acronym for Area-based Social Services Information System Technology, and has been in operation for two years.

## Modules: in Place and Planned

Fiscal 1984 was the first full year of operation for the system's Consumer Registration and Tracking modules, which collect and report data on the over 70,000 consumers served by DSS staff. The "detail design phase" has been underway for a Resource Registration and Inquiry module; this module will give social workers access to a comprehensive, up-to-date directory of service providers. Modules related to vendor payment, human resources and financial management are also planned.

## Support for Systems' Efforts

DSS systems development efforts have been carried out by an in-house staff with limited use of consultant help. Strong state and federal support throughout the project has been important to the success of these efforts. Within DSS, top management support and effective channels for providing user input have been crucial to the implementation and ongoing use of ASSIST.

## ASSIST Data Widely used

The Department relies more and more each day on the information provided to ASSIST by DSS social workers. ASSIST data is used for such wide ranging purposes as assessing client needs, developing support for area and regional budgets, allocating staff to area offices and developing ad hoc and routine output reports. Some ASSIST

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reports serve to help document compliance with regulations and court orders. Others, such as the Social Worker Caseload, Service Plan and Assessment Summaries, were requested by field staff to be used as "tickler reports."

Hook-up  
with Hotline

One of our most significant accomplishments in FY'84 was the design of a mechanism to share data on DSS children and families with the Judge Baker Guidance Center's Child-At-Risk Hotline. By expanding the availability of the ASSIST Name Search function to after-hours hotline workers, we will enable these workers to identify previously abused and neglected children who are subjects of hotline calls. This will improve the ability of hotline workers to facilitate emergency intervention when children are at risk of trauma from abuse or neglect.

# OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL

Christina Harms



Teisha Williams - Age 10

## The Guardianship Program

Endeavoring to place more foster children in permanent living situations, the Department is now sponsoring the appointment of selected foster parents as legal guardians for their foster children. Initiated this March, this program is an innovation in permanency planning.

## The Benefits of Guardianship

For those children for whom return home or adoption is not feasible, guardianship is an alternative permanent plan, far superior to the limbo of long-term foster care. Thus, although guardianship is not for every child, it is a wonderful plan for those children who meet the criteria, in that it legalizes an existing relationship and creates a legal recognition of the bond between a child and his emotional family.

## Developing the Program

Work on developing the program began in February of 1983, at which time a team of Department employees was formed, consisting of adoption workers, administrators and attorneys. Over the course of several months, research was done on guardianship law, questions were raised and answered, and a new regulation was drafted which established criteria for selecting appropriate cases.

## Other Avenues to Permanency Explored First

The first criterion is that there must be documentation by the DSS social worker showing that all efforts have been made to return the child home to his biological parents. Second, if the child cannot return home, supporting documentation must show that the child cannot be adopted. This is frequently the case with children over age 12 who prefer not to be adopted and who are legally entitled to decline adoption. Third, the child should have resided with the potential guardians for at least one year. Fourth, since the possibility of adoption is greater for young children, only children over the age of twelve will normally be considered.

## Working with Guardians, Children and Parents

Fifth, both the prospective guardians and the child must accept the plan. The biological parents, if available, will also be contacted by the social worker. During this



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meeting, the worker will explain the program, inform them that guardianship does not terminate their parental rights to the child, and explore their willingness to consent to the plan. Sixth, and perhaps most important, the case will be examined to determine whether the Department needs to remain involved. Only in those cases where the Department does not need to be involved, or is providing minimal services, will sponsored guardianship be considered.

#### Payments

Once a DSS-sponsored guardianship is in place, the Department continues making payments for the child, equivalent to the former foster care payments.

#### Procedures

The new DSS regulation which creates this program was promulgated in February of 1984. It has been supplemented with a set of procedures which set out in detail the steps a case must take before it is approved for DSS-sponsored guardianship. Once a potential case is identified by a social worker, then his/her supervisor, Area Director and Regional Director must approve the guardianship plan. The case is then discussed in conference by a DSS adoption worker, attorney and homefinder.

#### Pilot Program

The DSS guardianship program was implemented first in Worcester County on a trial basis. The reaction from foster parents and children alike has to date been very positive. After screening an initial 96 cases, 37 appear headed toward DSS-sponsored guardianship. The program is now being expanded statewide.

#### DSS in National Forefront

Nationally, guardianship is used by child welfare agencies as a placement alternative in approximately 20 % of the states. However, only California, Colorado and Illinois use guardianship in a manner similar to the innovative Massachusetts program.

## EXTERNAL RELATIONS DIVISION

William Dolan,  
Director



Vincent Tamboli - Age 6

### Foster Care Recruitment Campaign Launched

Under the leadership of Commissioner Matava, the Communications Unit successfully launched a Statewide Foster Care Recruitment/Public Education Campaign in FY'84. Working cooperatively with the Office of Professional Services, the task of organizing and implementing this campaign has been underway since November of 1983. The following are the major accomplishments to date of the Recruitment Task Force:

Developed DSS foster care logo and Campaign theme.

Toll-free recruitment telephone line put into place.

Governor signed proclamation declaring May to be Foster Parent Recognition Month.

Honorary Chairman of Campaign chosen: Jack Williams of WBZ-TV.

Governor Dukakis honored foster parents at a State House ceremony.

Local Foster Parent Recognition Events held across the State.

Worked with WSBK-TV on foster care "mini-series."

Produced Boston Red Sox public service announcements for television, in English and in Spanish.

Private industry support of campaign: Garelick Farms, Purity Supreme Supermarkets, Lowell Gas, Cape Cod Gas, Western Massachusetts Electric.

Developed foster care recruitment materials: brochures, flyers, posters and fact sheets.

Began producing foster parent newsletter.

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## Looking Ahead

Plans for the coming year include the continuation and expansion of the above activities, as well as the development of material to target the following:

Specialized adolescent foster care;

Foster care for handicapped/special needs children;

Respite foster care resources;

Foster care for children of incarcerated mothers; and

Foster care for linguistic and cultural minorities.

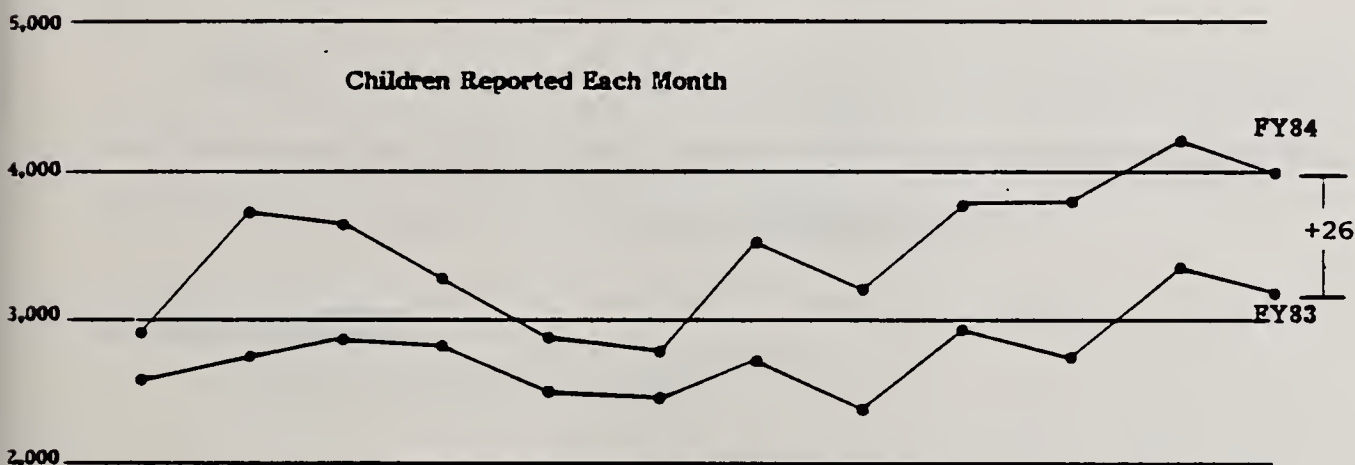
Additional materials will include brochures, flyers, posters, a foster parent handbook and a recruitment film. Materials for linguistic minorities will be translated as needed.



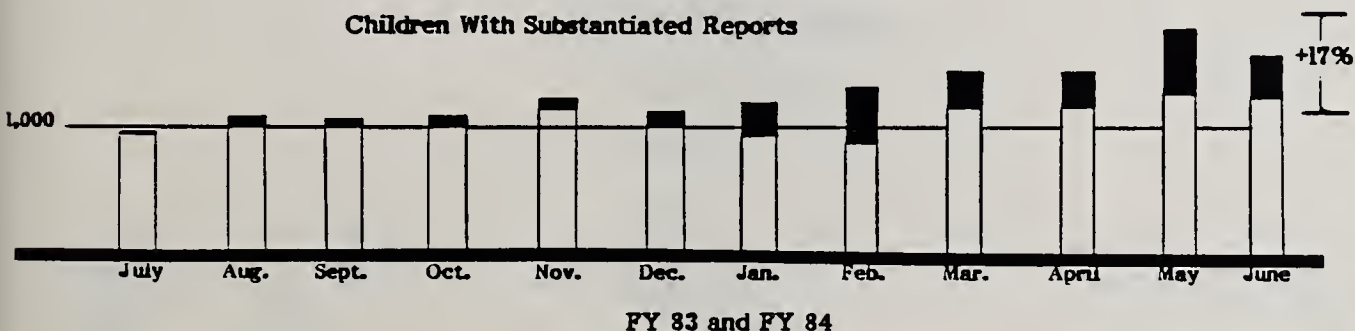
# Statewide Facts and Figures

- Our budget for Fiscal Year 1984 totaled \$225.1 million, and for Fiscal Year 1985, we will be working with a budget of \$242.5 million.
- As of June 30, 1984, we were providing services to 74,389 consumers.
- Combining finalizations by DSS staff and by staff from contracted agencies, an estimated 436 adoptions were finalized during FY'84.

## MONTHLY CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING



**ANNUAL TOTALS**  
 Children Reported:  
 FY84 = 41,116  
 FY83 = 32,640



**Children with Substantiated Reports:**  
 FY84 = 14,556  
 FY83 = 12,730 (est.)\*

\*July-Oct. are estimated



# Glossary of Services

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## DIRECT SERVICES

Direct services are those services provided to a consumer by a Department social worker. These services include:

- o assessing the consumer's situation;
- o developing a service plan with the consumer which meets identified needs;
- o linking the consumer to services provided through contract;
- o periodically reviewing progress toward service goals; and
- o supporting the consumer in periods of crisis and advocating for the consumer when necessary.

Through the provision of direct services to the consumer, the social worker develops a casework relationship which enables the consumer to accept and use services which promote well-being and independence.

## PURCHASED SERVICES

Purchased services included:

### Supportive Services

- Babysitting
- Camping
- Chore
- Day Care
- Homemaker
- Parent Aide
- Respite Services
- Services to Pregnant and Parenting Adolescents



S.B. - Age 5



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### Collateral Services

- Comprehensive Emergency Services
- Information and Referral

### Counseling Services

- Counseling
- Family and Adolescent Mediation
- Family Planning
- Intensive Family Service
- Legal
- Services to Women in Transition (WIT)
- Sexual Abuse Treatment Services

### Substitute Care

- Emergency Shelter
- Substitute Care
- Specialized Foster Care

### Adoption and Guardianship

- Adoption
- Subsidized Adoption
- Subsidized Guardianship



H.T. - Age 5



## Area Directors

Yolander Godfrey - Age 5

### REGION I:

Area 1	Pittsfield	Carolyn Burns
Area 2	Northampton/Greenfield	Dan Donahue
Area 3	Holyoke/Chicopee	James Quinn
Area 4	Springfield	James Sullivan (Acting)
Area 5	Westfield	Michael Weekes

### REGION II:

Area 6	Fitchburg	Mario Caceres
Area 7	Gardner	Nancy Driscoll
Area 8	Blackstone Valley	James Murphy
Area 9	South Central	Frank Pruszyński
Area 10	Worcester	John Rocheford

### REGION III:

Area 11	Lowell	Jacqueline Gervais
Area 12	Lawrence	Julie Hardin
Area 13	Haverhill	George Cashman
Area 14	Cape Ann	Nelson Woodfork
Area 15	Danvers/Salem	Magretta Buckley
Area 16	Lynn/Chelsea	Denise Maguire
Area 17	Eastern Middlesex	Joseph Bolino
Area 18	Tri-City	Gerard Docherty

### REGION IV:

Area 19	Concord	Joel Tragash
Area 20	Mystic Valley	Peter Keohan
Area 21	Beaverbrook	Eleanor Dowd
Area 22	Cambridge/Somerville	Bernadine Foster (Acting)
Area 23	Marlborough	Richard Simonian
Area 24	Framingham	Robert Kelly
Area 25	Newton	James Breay (Acting)
Area 26	Norwood	John Riordan
Area 27	Quincy	Jack Hauck
Area 28	Coastal	Leo Harrod

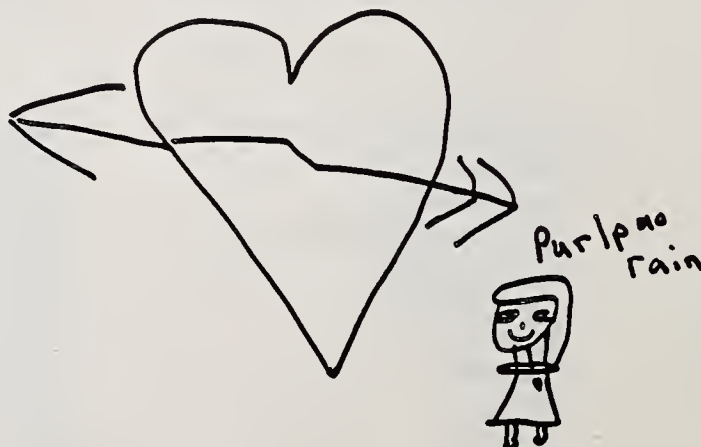
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REGION V:

Area 29	Attleboro	Joseph Cappadona
Area 30	Brockton	Michael Walsh
Area 31	Plymouth	Evelyn Strawn
Area 32	Taunton	Joan Loudon-Black
Area 33	Fall River	William Allen
Area 34	New Bedford	Louis Gomes
Area 35	Cape and Islands	Joseph Pare

REGION VI:

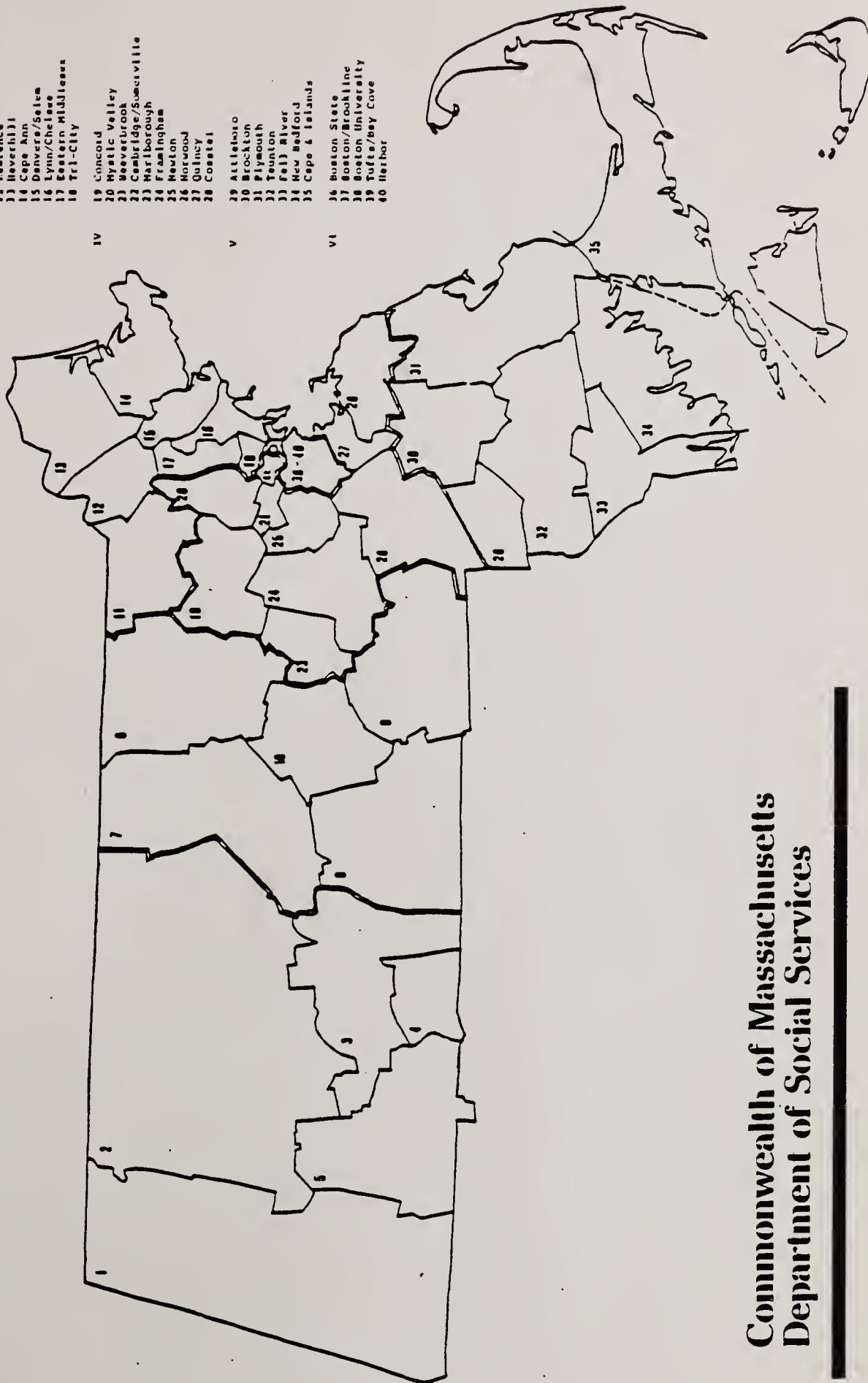
Area 36	Boston State	Ruth Aikens
Area 37	Boston/Brookline	John Gardiner
Area 38	Boston University	Gerald Robinson
Area 39	Tufts/Bay Cove	Lillian Jackson
Area 40	Harbor/Temporary Home for Women and Children	Suzanne Palma





MSA: Area

- I 1 Pittsfield
- 2 Northampton/Greenfield
- 3 Holyoke
- 4 Springfield
- 5 Westfield
- II 6 Fitchburg
- 7 Gardner
- 8 Blackstone Valley
- 9 South Central
- 10 Worcester
- III 11 Lowell
- 12 Lawrence
- 13 Haverhill
- 14 Cape Ann
- 15 Danvers/Salee
- 16 Lynn/Chelsea
- 17 Eastern Middlesex
- 18 Tri-City
- IV 19 Concord
- 20 Mystic Valley
- 21 Needham Heights
- 22 Cambridge/Somerville
- 23 Marlborough
- 24 Framingham
- 25 Newton
- 26 Norwood
- 27 Quincy
- 28 Coastal
- V 29 Attleboro
- 30 Brockton
- 31 Plymouth
- 32 Taunton
- 33 Fall River
- 34 New Bedford
- 35 Cape & Islands
- VI 36 Boston State
- 37 Boston/Brookline
- 38 Boston University
- 39 Tufts/Bay Cove
- 40 Harbor



# Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Social Services











